



P1 training and development

These Are a Few of My Favourite Things – NLP and Presentation Skills: Part 4

I am very lucky in that I get to do something I enjoy for a living. I enjoy the training and consultancy side equally and am fortunate I get to do a bit of both in varied businesses and commercial environments from SME to very large corporates. At last count here at P1 Towers we had something like 250 different course modules for all types of skills management and leadership training as well as our own SFMM Performance Management program. I enjoy them all. There are some I enjoy more than most of course. My favourite of all *is* presentation skills; closely followed by the Selling with NLP course and any of our new business sales courses (love new business). Michelle's favourite is her Leadership in Management course (NLP second) and Rick is a committed team development man. But I'm the one sat here late at night writing this so I get to pick!

I love the presentation skills courses for a number of reasons but mostly I think it is because it seems to be a great leveller; people of all ages, job roles, statuses and experience can sit around the same table on the same course and will learn, contribute opinions and benefit. Some are naturally better than others but I've worked with very senior, experienced people and junior personnel alike and this is the one subject they all seem to want to nail.

Waaaaay back in April of this year I wrote the first of these 4 articles starting with our presentation skills format BE A VVIP. It stands for the 7 key ingredients we focus on for the successful delivery of a presentation: **B**ody **E**yes **A**udience **P**articipation **V**isual **V**ocal **I**mpact and **P**ersonal. The BE A VVIP workshop you might remember had been tailored for a large telecoms client and I got to take it across the UK and parts of Europe (lastly to Holland...eventually...ash cloud cancellations...lightning strikes...3 ½ hour delays...turbulence so bad a stewardess got injured after being lifted off her feet by an air pocket!). The feedback from over 100 sales people was unanimously positive – a genuine 92% rating the course 'excellent' and 8% 'very good'. Above average, average, below average and poor didn't get a look in. Lovely jubbly!

In that first article I covered the key summary points focusing mainly on the bits we all already accept about presentations; use of slides, visuals, spoken word and presentation structures.

The format of that course you may recall gives delegates an insight (often their first insight) into NLP and the VAK learning styles and then marries the two (NLP and BE A VVIP) together in a practical workshop. The next two articles I wrote after the BE A VVIP article we took a look at NLP and our different learning styles and the way we receive, filter and deliver information. Quite a few of you wrote to me asking for the VAK test (the quick indicator to your preferred modes) and provided feedback so thank you for that.

I deliberately separated my two BE A VVIP presentation skills articles so that I could try and stimulate you a little with just the basics of NLP; I wanted to draw your attention to why these two subjects do go hand in hand. Below I will try and summarise the additional points I want to make with this final article.

A Quick recap....NLP



Visuals – they are influenced by what they see (35% of us according to stats)

Auditories – by what they hear (25%)

Kinaesthetics – by what they experience and feel (40%)

We all have preferred modes of receiving information. We will have secondary modes.

Interestingly the course I ran for the telecoms company (100 + people) produced some surprising results on the VAK test. 55% of them had preferred modes as Visual; 35% Kinaesthetic; 10% Auditory. The (just over) half who were visuals their secondary modes were split down the middle – 50% Kino and 50% Auditory. Those who were Kinos had Visual as their secondary score. Those who were Auditories had Kino as their dominant secondary score.

This is no scientific experiment and the results are nothing more than interesting so please don't quote me on these (I am looking for any results now that might indicate job function dominance for example, I'll keep you posted) but, once again, what a fascinating mix of information.

It confirms that when it comes to presentations we have no choice but to make considerations for these things and the BE A VVIP template does make life simpler and making use of NLP, certainly in a presentation format, makes sense.

So let's look a little more now at the remaining elements I glossed over from BE A VVIP and see, now that you have a better understanding of why different people get different things from presentations, which additional things will really help influence your audience in addition to the things we have already covered:

Body and Eyes – how you use your body will definitely influence the visuals but also the kinaesthetics. The visual will be influenced by your body and hand movements (orchestration I like to call it). David Cameron is definitely being coached in this area you can tell, watch his hand emphasis. Tony Blair was also very good at this as is, of course, Barrack Obama. When you are presenting what are you doing with your hands? Folded in front of you? In pockets? Behind your back? Scratching? Touching your face? Scratching and touching of your face (even a gentle rub) is a sign of defence. Of discomfort. Scratching elsewhere is....just not pleasant to look at. You see, your Visual is getting distracted by these things and your Kino is getting an uncomfortable feeling! Additionally with your hands; think about using your forefinger to subtly underscore a key point of phrase. Barrack and Dave often use the forefinger underscore when they want you to know there is 'no doubt' that what they are saying is true. Check it out. Maybe even video yourself you will be amazed at what you see. One of my delegates recently was an habitual 'holster-er'. After every key point HE thought was impressive he would push his arms out in front of him as if he was about to holster his pistols. He didn't know he did this and his colleagues said he always did it but nobody had the heart to tell him but everybody agreed they found it distracting when he presented!!!

There are many things your body movement is telling your audience. Hands in pockets (mainly men) is very often a nervous action but is actually seen by the audience as indifference and maybe even arrogant. *One* hand in the pocket from time to time is actually seen as casually confident and relaxed about the subject matter as long as the other hand is active / orchestrating. Me? I like to mix it. I will select when I put my (one) hand in my pocket but in my other hand i usually hold a remote 'clicker' for my slides and use it for emphasis and orchestration. I deliberately remove any coins or keys from pockets to prevent the subconscious urge to jangle (you won't know you're doing it but the auditories will!).

I talk about orchestration a lot. No movement is as bad as, if not worse than, too much movement. Your audience wants to be comfortable you are comfortable so think about occasional hand and arm movement for key point emphasis. If you are presenting to smaller audiences you can draw them towards key points on a screen for example. Moving towards a slide and saying "I just want to highlight this key point here" or my favourite "what I'd



really like you to take notice of is this point here" will force you to move, will stimulate your visuals and kinos and will create a natural, what we like to call, SOI - Statement Of Intent. This is where you tell your audience what is it you want them to remember most. An SOI sounds like a simple thing to do but most people don't do it. They assume their audience knows what they should be interested in/focusing on. They don't tell their audience what it is *they* want them to notice.

Remember...the human brain computes any message positively. Any message. Even negative ones. If I was to ask you to close your eyes and NOT think of a giraffe you *would* think of a giraffe. You might tell yourself not to but you already have. Sounds simple but think about it. Soooooo, telling people what it is you *want* them to notice compels them to notice it. And it will stick in their minds even IF they tell themselves not to!!

Audience Participation/Personal

40% of us have Kinaesthetic preferences. In my unscientific observations Kinos are also the dominant secondary mode for Visuals and Auditories. Kinos like to be involved, to be engaged, take part, make physical contact, make emotional contact. This is where the A (Audience Participation) and P (Personal) play a big part in BE A VVIP.

My course delegates find audience participation the hardest thing to do when they are presenting but it needn't be hard and it could well be the most influential part of your presentation. The easier thing to do to get your audience involved is give them a chance to ask questions. If you can allow them to ask during your presentation when it suits *them* (it will allow them to concentrate on your presentation rather than be distracted by their own question and how *they* will 'perform'). Next, think about asking *them* questions during your presentation. Seek opinion, affirmation, debate. If you know your subject matter and your sales proposition then why not? Your audience will really appreciate the chance to take part, will be impressed at your willingness and confidence to engage with them and will definitely feel more engaged in what you are doing. Right Kinos?

Another way of achieving audience engagement is to identify certain parts of your presentation that can have a physical interaction. For example do you really need to show people pictures of your latest environmental brochure on a screen/PowerPoint when you can hand it out? Do you need to put a slide up with that technical diagram in when you could print off a nice colour (has to be colour) handout of it and hand it out at that point? It's not just that the clarity of the content would be better delivered this way rather than a screen where the writing is so small nobody can read it anyway, it also provides that oh-so-important contact and physical engagement.

Anybody reading this in the furniture or building industry will know how important story boards and fabric/finish samples are to presentations. The audience love to hand those around and touch and feel. Just think about the different ways you can achieve similar audience participation with products, brochures, samples, technical info, etc during your presentation rather than at the end like most people tend to do. The only thing you have to watch out for is not to give out all your props St the start. Give them out at the appropriate time. People will forget about you as they flick the through the stuff you've asked them to ignore for now!

P for Personal - your presentation is just as much about you as it is about your commercial proposition. More so probably. What do your audience want to know about you? I try and include a little bit of personal information at the start. Kids, family, where I live etc are safe ones if appropriate to the audience as it puts a human touch on



things and makes the Kinosh feel an emotional/personal connection. The next one to think about is your experience. Your audience need to have some understanding of your personal connection to the subject matter and their needs. Think of them and ask yourself how you are *relevant* to them? Then tell 'em!

But the main thing you need to consider on 'Personal' – your passions; your enthusiasms. What are you passionate about? Which bit of your company's proposition do you think is *the* best thing? No really. I'm serious. You are working for your company/running your business from choice. Why do you choose to do that? What do you think is great about what you do/where you work? Even if you are not happy about certain bits there will be parts you think are spot on. Do you absolutely love the team of experienced and 'can do' people you have supporting you? Do you get really excited about your company's unique service solution? What about your new software; your customer service team; your delivery drivers. Think about those things. Ideally your passions should be a mirror of your clients/audiences needs and wants. Again remember to tell them what it is you find great about your business/offering. The Kinosh will be positively affected by that in a kind of "well if he/she is working there for that reason that must be good" kind of way.

I've run out of space I'm afraid. As I said right at the start of my first BE A VVIP article in April I would try and marry up the key parts of presentation skills and NLP as best I could over the 4 articles. There is so much more but I'm afraid you are going to have to book yourself on the course for the full Monty. Drop me a line if interested in attending a future course (we are planning several). Gary@p1td.co.uk

Next month I will move on to a new subject. I hope you've enjoyed these recent articles; they really are my favourite as I mentioned earlier. If any of you have missed previous articles and would like copies of them they are available as free downloads along with numerous other articles and help sheets we have produced at www.p1td.co.uk on the 'downloads' tab (clever that eh?).

Thanks for listening, I hope some of these tips help you feel more confident when you present in future and see you next time!